

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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Sent To Reveal

SCRIPTURE

John 1:14-18



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Well, good morning, Providence family, and those of you who are guests, we're really glad you're here. Whether you're in the room, or if you're at home, we're glad that you have joined us. I want to confess something that I have confessed the two last services, and that is that I woke up this morning at four something, and I just felt heavy. And the reason I felt heavy was I felt at risk for you, for us as a church family, as we enter advent season, and the magical is dangled in front of us, the wonder of Christmas and everything that's going to populate our time, our mind, our homes, our relationship, our schedule, our attention.

The wonder of Christmas is Christ, and most people are going to spend no time thinking about him this month. And that includes many people who are going to sit in churches like this one, and as a result of that, we all run this tremendous risk of waking up on the 25th and having missed the whole thing. Emotionally empty, spiritually dry, busy, tired, needing a nap, bloated, and a little bit poorer, all in the hope of capitalizing on the magical. You need magical, that's why it sells. That's why we do all that we do. It's the heart craves magical. It craves something more than our routine, everyday lives, and Christmas it just puts it right out there for us.

So, my appeal to you is what we're going to do when we gather and what I'm going to encourage you to do when you are at home, not gathering with other people, is to wrestle your attention and to look at Jesus, to ask him even today, to populate your days with meaningful activity and opportunities, where you see more of his grace and his kindness to you. And when we gather, what we're going to do, what I'm going to try to help us to do is to imagine. A lot of us, we don't imagine, we're not very creative like we can be, because we don't think in color. Oftentimes, we think in black and white, we read it, we're like, "All right, that's what happens. Let me move on."

But I want to encourage you to try to imagine the events and let's start with this one. Imagine the actual moment, that hush that swept over heaven when God almighty looked at his son and said, "It is time." And then, sent him to the Earth. Imagine, if you can, seeing Jesus stand from his throne in the quietness of heaven, divesting himself of everything that looked honorable, taking the garb of a servant and coming to the Earth as one who is sent. We talk about this word, sent, we all know what it's like to be sent. We've all been sent somewhere for something. "Go to the grocery store, get this." That was my Thursday or at least part of Thursday, right? I was sent to the grocery store.

To be sent is to be directed to go to a particular place, at a specific time, in order to accomplish a purpose. And it's interesting is that Jesus lived this entire time on the Earth with absolute clarity within his heart, within his mind, that he was the sent one. The Gospel of John keeps referring to this, over 30 times Jesus speaks about being sent, why he was sent, how he was sent, who sent him. And it seemed to color everything about his entire life. John chapter eight, verse 42, he says, "I came from God and I am here. I came not of my own accord, but he sent me." And this awareness, it colored his understanding of his very activity in his day.

In John 6, he says, "I've come down from heaven, not to do my will, but the will of him who sent me." It colored and shaped the words that came out of his mouth. In John chapter seven, Jesus said, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me." It colored his understanding of his planning and future planning, and what was going to happen in his tomorrow and the tomorrow after tomorrow, when he says in John 7:33, "I will be with you a little longer and then I'm going to him who sent me." What you find throughout the Gospel of John emphasized is that Jesus was not like a leaf that was blowing in the wind. He didn't come to the Earth to find himself. He didn't grow in his understanding of his purpose. He came with a purpose and he came to accomplish that purpose, because he was sent.

And what we're going to do over the next month is we're going to look at some of the purposes that he talks about, of why he was sent. Today, if you have a Bible, turn with me to John chapter one, we're going to look at this purpose that he was sent to reveal. There's really two important reasons why I want to focus on this one in particular, why we're doing this series, even. Why is it important for you to know why Jesus Christ was sent and that he was sent to the Earth? One of the reasons is when you understand why he came to the Earth, you understand the needs in you that he intended to meet. You see the kindness of his heart. You see the grace and the mercy of his heart to say, "This is why I came and why I came was ultimately to benefit you."

But there's another reason. We've been talking over the last several months about reaching people, the importance of identifying people that we can pray for, and we can see, and we can bless, and we can invite for a meal, and we can serve, and we can share the gospel with. All this comes from a passage in John, where he says, "As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you." What that means is this, if you are a follower of Jesus Christ, it is critically important for you to understand the purposes for which Jesus was sent, because Jesus has already sent you for those purposes as well.

You are on the Earth in order to have a continuation of his ministry. In other words, every single thing that we're going to learn of what he tells us or why he came, why he was sent, it's going to hit a mirror and he's going to say, "Now, this is the intent of why I now have you on the Earth and how I desire for you to behave." And so, let me pray for us and then we'll read. Father in heaven, we ask that you would rescue us from ourself. That you would rescue us from distractions, not only in culture, but within our heart. I asked Father that as our hearts long for advent to be sensational, as we long for Christmas to be fulfilling, I pray God that you would rescue us, that you would help us to see just the mystery and the wonder of Christ himself. And so, would you help us to imagine the beauty and the splendor, and help us to feel those things when we imagine that you came, Jesus, to reveal God, truth, and grace to us. We pray all of this in Christ's name. Amen.

John chapter one, starting at verse 14, it says, "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only son from the father, full of grace and truth. John," this is John the Baptist, "bore witness about him and cried out, 'This was he of whom I said, he who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.' For, from his fullness, we have all received grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses and grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God, the only God who

is at the Father's side, he has made him known.”

Most of us know what it's like to be in a really, really dark room, eventually though, because we live in a world where there's still light, even when it feels so dark, is eventually our eyes find a way to capture whatever light is there, even if it's minimal, for us to be able to adjust our vision so that we can still see and not knock ourself over as we're walking through the room. All of us know darkness and yet, there are places in the world to where there is no light. 10 years ago, my wife, Tabitha and I, we decided to take our three sons, who at the time were roughly eight, nine, and 10, to a cave in Georgia, to go caving. We had a guide with us, okay. I've had been asked that a lot of times, there was a guide.

And so, we drive out there and we park and we have to walk about 400 yards, and then, we get to this hole in the ground and this was the hole in the ground. Okay. And so, what we did with them, which was really an amazing experience, and we only did it once because it was enough. But after dropping down into this entrance, what we did, this is no exaggeration, we slid down these muddy caverns and tight crevices for two hours, two hours going down. We got to this underground river, which was really amazing. And there was all kinds of experiences.

We're all in the mud, we're crawling and sliding and climbing. It really was an amazing experience. We all had headlamps and even down there where there was no light whatsoever, it was still beautiful with the headlamps. But a few times simply because it was fun, we would turn all the lights off and you literally could not see anything, and your eyes never adjusted simply because there was no light to be found. I've never felt that kind of darkness before. But it's interesting is that even in the beauty that was captured by those headlamps, there came a point in time for every one of us when we missed the sunlight and we wanted out, but we were still two hours away.

So, if you can imagine that moment, then you can imagine what I'm about to say and that is, how tragic would it have been in that moment for us to deny the existence of the entrance of that cave, because we could no longer see it? Or how tragic would it have been had we had to guess as to its location? I tell you those things, because John tells us something here that is really, really devastating, and that is that when you look at the world that we live in and all of its brokenness, there is literally only one solution, and that is Jesus Christ. God almighty needs to intervene in this mess, and if he doesn't, we won't. And this passage says that our eyes cannot see him.

Now, that's hard. The only savior in the world today, the only hope for this country, the only hope for any country, the only hope for your marriage, the only hope for your children, the only hope for the brokenness in the world is God himself. And John tells us here emphatically that we cannot see him with our eyes. Well, God cares so much about you and he cares so much about me and he's so aware of our tendency to either deny or speculate about what we cannot see with our eyes. And so, he does something at Christmas, the first Christmas, in order to care for us, and that is that he sent Christ to reveal himself to us.

It really is a remarkable thing. Every one of us, there's a few things that we all want today. Every one of us long for clearer understanding of who God is, like if we had the opportunity to sit before him and learn anything from him, we would probably take that opportunity to say, "This is my creator." But there's another thing that we would all long for, and that is clarity or truth as to how to live in his world. Some of us are facing decisions. Some of us are facing problems at work or at home, in our marriage, our children, we just say, "God, would you just advise, give me clarity? I'll do whatever it is you want. Just tell me what you want. I need truth."

And then, there's another thing that we all long for and that is, I have regret and I have guilt and I have shame within my heart, and I need clarity, I need truth, I need revelation as to how to get rid of it. And the beauty about what we just read, that I want to show you right now, is that Jesus came to reveal the answers to all three of those problems. The first thing we see is that Jesus was sent to reveal the glory of God, to reveal the glory of God, his person, his character, his glory. You see, when it comes to knowing God, there's only two options, revelation, speculation. In other words, God can tell us, he can reveal who he is, or we can try to guess. And if we have to guess, then isn't it also true that we have to guess within the confines of the categories that are already in our imagination?

In other words, we're not guessing characteristics that we know nothing about, and so therefore, whatever it is that is in our imagination, if we don't know who God is and he doesn't reveal himself to us, we have to speculate about who he is and therefore, we only can use the categories of things that fit within our brain. In other words, if you're following, that God almighty created us in his image and if he doesn't reveal who he is, we return the favor. We simply create a God, not the God, but a God in our image, in our imagination.

And so, you start to imagine what populates our mind, our thoughts. For some people, the most dominant thought that populates their own imagination when it comes to the things of God, is there isn't one and that's the formulation of atheism, there just isn't a God. Well, that's speculation. Some people, they're convinced that there's a God, but also their heart is so full of whether it's shame or sympathy towards their fallenness and their brokenness and the brokenness of the world that they say, "If there's a God, then the God must be all gracious, all merciful, no justice. There's no one way anyway, because look at the needs that we have." And so, what this creates is universalism. It's a guess.

Some people, the dominant thing within their own heart is not shame, it's pride. They're convinced they have earned it or can earn it. And so, they create a God called religion, where instead of all mercy, no justice, they say, "We don't need any mercy, we only need justice because look how great I am. Look how great I can be." Some people, this is for all of us and all of us are guilty of this, by the way, we have all imagined things about God that are not true of God. As we look at just human characteristics and we look around the room and we're like, "Well, that person's strong, so God must be strong. That person's kind and so, God must be kind." We look at ourselves and sometimes it's even negative characteristics like jealousy, envy, rage, and we think, well, God just is a super us. He's like us plus. This is mythology.

It's human beings guessing about what gods would be like and what are they? They're just glorified us and our strengths and weaknesses. So, you have these Greek gods who what? They're mean and vengeful and strong and wise. It's speculation about who God is. And then there's one other kind of category that fills the heart of man, that we have to use as the ingredients to speculate about who God is, and that's our desires. We look at our fears. We look at our wants, our desires, our needs, and we say, "Well, if I have those fears, then this God must be able to take them away. And if I have a want, then if there's a God, he will give it to me." Well, this is called philosophy. And so, the speculation of man, what does it create? It creates atheism, universalism, religion, mythology, and philosophy.

And God looks at us, and in mercy and love, he says, "You guys are really bad guessers, and so let me send my son, the Christ, to tell you who I am." And that's exactly what he does. Verse 14, it says, "The Word became flesh. The Word became flesh." Now, some of us, we look at that saying, "The Word, how come he doesn't use the word Jesus there?" Well, there's a lot of places within the New Testament and Old Testament, where they use titles. Sometimes they're titles and it's like a metaphor. And so, we find that he's the son of God, he's the son of man, he's the prince of peace, he's the living water, he's the bread from heaven. Well, all of these things, they're true characteristics about who he is, and they're all characteristics of the things that we need.

And so, when you and I, when we want to communicate, we use words, don't we? When we want to express something about ourselves, we use words. When we're trying to get to know somebody, we're asking questions with words and we give answers to those same questions, and we use words. We use words to try to reveal. And so, when you think about God almighty sending his son to the Earth, in order to reveal to us, what's one of the metaphors that he uses about his son? He says, "Oh, this is the Word. John chapter one, verse one, "In the beginning." Right? "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." He's speaking here about something that we call the amazing trinity, right? Which is tri unity. One God, three persons, father, son, the spirit.

And so, in the very first verse of his letter he goes, "The Word or Christ, the son of God, he was there, he was with God, and he was God." And so if you take that truth and you put it over verse 14, when it says, "And the Word became flesh." What that means is this, is that God became flesh. He didn't appear human, he was human. He actually took on a human body that could get tired and that could bleed. He actually took on a human heart that could feel anxiety, that feel fear, that could feel human types of feelings. He became a man and he dwelt among us. We used the term dwell and we think, "Oh, he built a big house next to our house." And it's interesting that the word that he uses, dwelt, it means to put up your tent.

In other words, God looks at us and you think, "Oh, look at my big house." And God looks and he goes, you're all camping. It's all fragile. Oh, it feels so big. What about the brick, look how strong they are. And he's like, "Yeah, please, a little water and some wind, I can knock that down." It's a tent. So, what did God do? He goes, "Son, I need you to go and go camping with them." See if I moved into your neighborhood, next door to you and I built a 20 foot wall around my house, it would communicate to you some things about my desire

to interact with you. Wouldn't it? About my desire to be known and to know you.

But if I set up a tent in your front yard, it would communicate something very different. Wouldn't it? And this is what Jesus did. He came and he came close so that we could see him as he is. Verse 18 seeks to describe it this way, "No one has ever seen God." But then he says, look, "The only God who is at the Father's side," that's Christ, "he has made him known." And do you see the mercy of this moment? For we have sinned against God and it caused separation. When a sinner once asked God, "I want to see your glory. I want to see your face." God responded with these words, "Man shall not see me and live. My holiness would literally give you a heart attack."

That's why when you keep looking through the Bible, you actually even find holy angels, when God showed up to men in his glory, not just being able to see his face, but just the reflection of his glory, they would fall down, and oftentimes everyone thought he was dead. It was just too overwhelming. But in Christ, verse 14 says that, "We have seen his glory. Glory as of the only son from the Father." And what that means is to see Jesus is to see the Father, to hear Jesus speak is to hear the Father speak to us. Jesus said it this way, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father." Now, do you know what that means? Some of you, you think, "Hey, I have this relationship with Christ, because I can see him, but I wonder what the Father is like." You don't have to guess. It's exactly like Jesus.

In other words, when Jesus was teaching, Jesus was revealing the father's uninventable wisdom. There's things, when you read through the gospels and you read what Jesus is saying, no human being would ever invent that teaching. And he says, "What I'm trying to communicate to you is something that God the Father would teach you and will teach you when you see him." When Jesus was washing his disciples feet, Jesus was revealing the father's uninventable humility. Did you know that there is simply no religion, no philosophy ... Human beings have never invented a humble God. And you would be in that mix, if I ask you, "Hey, take a piece of paper and write characteristics, if you were going to design a God, what would it be like in?" None of us would say, "Foot washer." But that's who he was. That's who he is.

When Jesus was touching lepers and sinners and eating with them, he revealed the father's uninventable, unaltering purity. Religion had always said, "You can't be with sinners because it's going to rub off on you. You can't touch lepers because you're going to be made unclean." Jesus put his hands directly on the skin of a leper in order to say, "My purity is unalterable, and God the Father's purity is unalterable." When Jesus welcomed kids into his presence, he was revealing the Father's uninventable tenderness. When Jesus was cleansing the temple, he was revealing the father's uninventable anger towards religion and legalism.

When Jesus was healing people who were utterly forgotten in culture, there was a blind man, his name was Bartimaeus, he's sitting on the curb and because he's always at the curb, no one even sees him at the curb. He's forgotten by culture because he's always there. Jesus stops his parade in order to interact with that one man to heal him. And when he did, he was revealing that the Father has love for the forgotten. Did you know that

there's never been a human being that has invented a God who remembers people that culture forgets? And when Jesus Christ was suffering on his cross, he revealed the father's uninventable combination of justice and ability to justify.

Human beings have always been able to only capture one of those within our imagination. We can say, "He's just, he's righteous, he's perfect. And that's it." Or, we say, "He's gracious, he's kind, he's merciful, he's going to forgive me. And that's it." In the gospel, when Jesus is hanging on the cross, is God saying, "There will be a payment in order to satisfy my wrath and justice and yet I am willing to send my own son in order to make that payment so that I can justify you if you'll believe upon him." This is uninventable. It's never been created. It's only been revealed.

The second thing we learn is that Jesus was sent to reveal the truth of God. We all need truth. We all have things right now in front of us where we think, "I don't know what to do." I just love this, right? In the beginning it says that God created the heavens and the Earth. He creates mankind and then he looks at man and he goes, "Welcome to my world. So glad you came. All this is for you, but this one here will kill you, and the day you eat this you will surely die." So, he's befriending his creation with words, and then he's instructing his creation with words. He's constantly revealing. And yet, we sinned against God.

Now, most of us know what it's like to be sinned against. How we'd normally treat people that we feel sinned against is we give them the silent treatment, right? We think, "You know what? A little passive aggression's going to work real nice right now, because they've not come and groveled. And so, what I'm going to do, I'm just not going to talk to them and then they're going to notice, you know what? That person hasn't talked to me in a while, I bet they're mad." God could have given the ultimate silent treatment to humanity, instead what he did was he spoke first.

He comes to us and one of the first things he does is he gives the law and that's what we find in verse 17. He says, "The law was given through Moses." But what we know about the law and what the New Testament teaches about the law, was the law was limited in its capacity to help us. Oh, it was helpful, but it was limited. And let me try to describe how, by going back to that cave in Georgia, one of the things I haven't told you is when we were going down, we kept noticing these red arrows going up. Somebody had gone and in the kindness of their heart had painted arrows to be able to point the way back to the entrance of that cave.

But let me tell you something about those arrows, they were no light source in themselves, they didn't blink in the darkness, they didn't shine, you couldn't see them, nor did they help me crawl or carry my pack. What they did was point when light was pointed at them, and this is precisely the role of the law. Oh the law, it pointed to God, it pointed to us, it pointed us how to live in the world, and yet it couldn't help us crawl and it couldn't carry our pack. And so, what did God do? He sent his son. And what did his son do? He came to the Earth as the light of the world. He cast his own light upon the law, in order to show that the law was pointing back to him. He was saying, "I'm the one you've been waiting for." The law kept saying, "This is the one that

we've been waiting for, this is the one that's been promised. You need to trust and you need to trust in him."

You see, this is why he says in verse 17, "The law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus." You see, not only did Jesus Christ teach literally about every pertinent issue known to mankind, everything that we've long, we find within the gospels themselves. We find clear, lucid teaching about origin, purpose, destiny, heaven, hell, life, justice, grace, anxiety, depression, singleness, marriage, sexuality, gender, parenting, money, leadership, work, worship, love. It goes on and on and on. He instructed us. He told us how to live our life, but not only did he do that, but when he went to heaven, he sent his holy spirit to come live within us, to help us crawl and to help us carry the pack.

In other words, the holy spirit and Christ, it doesn't just say, "Hey, try that." But he lives within us in order to strengthen our hands and incline our heart and open our heart and satisfy our heart to help us to even want to obey. You see, without revelation though, we're left at two things, we either reject absolute truth, or we have to guess what truth is. And if you simply look at your home, your heart, your history, our culture, society, you look at the brokenness in the marketplace, brokenness in the church, brokenness literally everywhere. It proves something so clear, and that is this, is that we guess poorly. And when we guess poorly, it causes regret and that leads us to the third thing that Jesus revealed, and that is that Jesus was sent to reveal the grace of God.

Without revelation, we either have to deny our regrets. You've probably seen somebody with a tattoo it says, "No regrets." Which is an advertisement that says, "I have tons of regrets, but I don't know what to do with them, so I'm just going to say I don't have them." We can deny the shame and regret and the feeling of feeling dirty, "I wish I wouldn't have done that." Or we have to guess how to get rid of them. So, how do we guess? Really, there's only a number of ways. Let me show you four of them. How they all are broken. First, we try running from our regret. Did you know that some of you live in Raleigh right now because you ran from a regret?

Some of us will run from Raleigh because of something we will soon regret. The problem though, with running from regrets is we simply cannot outrun what we carry. It's within you and so you simply can't outrun it. And since that doesn't work, what we try to do is we try to numb ourselves to our regret. We try to drink a lot. We try to eat a lot. We try to do drugs a lot. We try to play video games. And we try to do things a whole lot. But the problem with this is, we simply cannot erase guilt by creating other categories of guilt. And so, we try then to clean our regrets. We say, "Well, if I just do enough good things, maybe the good is going to counteract the bad that I feel, and maybe my regrets will go away, my guilt and my shame."

But this is as futile as trying to remove the salt from the ocean by adding glasses of fresh water. Oh, it's still a good thing to add fresh water, but no amount of additional fresh water is going to remove the salt that already remains in the ocean. And no amount of goodness is going to remove the sin and regret that is already in our heart. And that leads us to one last thing that we do, it's the last ditch effort. We try to redefine our regrets.

We say, "You know what? If I can't run from them, drown them, whatever, I'm just going to redefine what the truth is and declare myself innocent." The problem is this, is we simply cannot erase the law that's already been written on our heart.

God knew that denying a regret or guessing how to get rid of it wouldn't work, and so, he sent Christ. And this says that Jesus Christ was full of grace. Grace means unmerited favor. It's the motivation behind forgiveness. He extends that grace to us. "Jesus Christ entered our cave, lived in that darkness with us, lived without sin, died for our sin, rose from the grave." And then it says that, "He forgives all who trust in him." The word forgive, it means to send away. It's to take our guilt, our regret, our shame and send it away. Not to numb it or to outrun it, it's to send it away. Some of you simply do not know yet the joy of a clean conscience, but let me tell you something, it is remarkably sweet to wake up in the morning and look in the mirror and not say, "I'm ashamed of you." It's a gift and it's available to all of us because of Christ. You can know that today.

That's why verse 16 says, "From his fullness, we've received grace upon grace." I stunned myself at how persistent I am to sin. And what it says is this, is no matter how deep the footers of my sin, grace goes deeper. Old grace is perpetually replaced by new grace. He forgave me yesterday and he forgave me tomorrow, or this morning, and God willing because of his grace, he's going to forgive tomorrow. He came to reveal all of these things, and so what do we do with this? Let me just give you a few applications and then we're going to sing. We're going to sing because Christ is, he is the powerful one, he is the beautiful one. He is the wonder of the season.

So, the first thing I have for you is this, let me encourage you. These should not be surprises to you. These should be just simply the obvious responses to what you've just heard. In light of all of this, let me first encourage you to put your trust in Christ. And I know some of you, you think, "Oh, this is where he is talking to people who have never trusted Christ." And so let me just rephrase and say, if you're a Christian, I need you to listen first. One of the great faults that we have, it's one of the great treasons within our heart, is that we read a portion of his book, his revelation, and we say, "I could never worship a God like that. So, that characteristic is simply not going to be a part of the one that I worship."

So, let me just remind you of something. God is not the compilation of our thoughts. If the God that you worship is simply the compilation of your imagination, you're not worshipping God, you're worshipping you. He is who he is, and if every one of us refused to believe in him, it would not change his character, his being, his authority, his supremacy, his sovereignty, in any way. He is who he is. There are people who don't like the son, and yet it doesn't change that the son is there for us to come to the Bible and say, "I don't like that about God. I'm not going to worship a God that might send somebody to hell if they don't trust his son." It's treason. We live in his world. He's given us a way. Trust him.

When you open the Bible and you find something you don't like, there's things I don't like, I'm like, that makes me uncomfortable. The solution is not to redefine the Bible, it's to repent. He's right, always. So, if I

cross him, he doesn't change, I have to change, my mind has to change. Trust him. And if you've never trusted him, to admit that you are a sinner in need of grace and to put your faith and trust in him, to confess to him as Lord, he forgives you of your sin. Have you trusted him? And Christian, are you trusting him today?

The second thing I would encourage us to consider in this season is to prepare your heart to feel the wonder of Christ. As I said earlier, at the very beginning, as anticipation for the magical is dangled before us, there are so many of us are going to find that our anticipation is even sweeter than reality. Some of us, we are going to put all of the magical on a gift or an experience or a family dinner, and suddenly we're not going to give the gift, we're not going to have the experience, and the family dinner is going to be interrupted by quarreling. Can you still rejoice and feel the wonder of Christmas in that moment? Those who will are those who recognize that the wonder of Christmas is Christ. That we have Christ. We have him. He's speaking to us, he's with us.

So, let me encourage you to ask God even today, to protect you from wasting another Christmas. Let me urge you to ask God to open your heart, incline your heart to his Word, unite your heart to fear him, to satisfy your heart with his Word, by reminding you of his glory, his truth, and his grace every single day. If you have a tool to prepare your heart and help you to think about these things, use that tool. If not, there's a free one in the lobby. And the last thing is this, I want to encourage us to look to share the truth of Christmas with somebody this month.

Our king, that we love, came to reveal God's glory, truth, and grace and then he sent us to do the same. And we can say, "That's not for me, that's for somebody else." But Jesus said, "It's for you. As the Father sent me, if you're a Christian, so I send you to reveal what has been revealed to you. To tell people about the glory of God and the truth of God and the grace of God." We've been talking about having people in our life that we're praying for and we're blessing, we're inviting, we're inviting for a meal. Let me encourage you, before the holiday gets upon you to make a plan to say, "Okay, here's a person, what night could we invite them over for a meal? Which Christmas concert could I invite them to? What's one way for me to be able in this season to encourage them or to serve them, what's one way?" Be intentional. And so, it's not lost upon us.

So, let me pray. Father in heaven, as we prepare to sing to you, we thank you that grace and truth and glory have been revealed to us in Jesus. We've heard the news and we've seen the news within the scriptures and now we want to tell the news. We begin by singing it to you, that we believe that we have found in you the greatest beauty, the greatest power, the greatest splendor. The wonder that our hearts long for and that we get distracted all the time and assuming it's in something else, it's really in you. And so, I ask you to protect us as a church family, this Christmas season, protect our joy and hope, Lord, that we would celebrate maybe the sweetest Christmas that we have. And so, we look to you now, we sing to you now with all of our heart, we pray this in Christ's name. Amen.



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